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4. Each wall and tower replies to her with its lonely sullen echo: the cock has forgotten his wonted call, and announces not time nor hour.

5. Alas, youthful Oliver of my heart, it is thy death the banshee laments—it is that which brings night on the day—it is it which brings sadness on the people.

6. Woe is me, nought now remains to us in the hero's stead, but lamentation and tears: pouring out of tears, weeping and lamentation, hereafter to us, and breaking of hearts.

7. Alas! O death, thou hast laid low for ever the blossom and beauty of our highest branch:—not satisfied with thy conquest till the head of our race sunk into the grave.

8. Strong was his arm in the clash of swords, defending the right of his race and kindred, beneath the standard of his father:—and Ormond[*] who acquired fame afar.

9. Not usual in Courtstown is the mist of Lonon that *cannot be dispelled: O the heart of its faithful lord is* wounded through the death of the youth of mighty deeds.

10. The true heir of his name, his fame and his power, and the heir of his domains in each region of Erin: Stately as the oak was his aspect—he promised to spread wide his branches.

11. But not thus was the hero's fate:—It was to descend alone to the silent tomb. Alas! 'twas a long woe to him in his day, and sorrow of heart to his spouse[†] for ever.

12. She is a mother oppressed with grief—descending swiftly to her spouse in the grave—the father of her children, and her first love:—Alas, anguish is her lot.

13. No more shall he follow the chace under the dark vales of the misty hills;—the sweet sounding horn no more shall he hear—nor the voice of the hounds on the mountain top.

14. No more shall we behold him on his fleet young steed, bounding o'er fence and dyke:—There is an eclipse on his beauty for ever; deep mist has descended on his greatness.

15. Weak lies his bounteous hand; dead and powerless is his manly heart—the descendant of heroes, and friend of the bard, the lover of the minstrel's lofty strain.

16. Thy fame needs not the light of song; but my lament shall ascend on high, and my tears shall fall at the close of each day, on the tomb of the hero for whom my heart is broken. W. W.

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[*] James the 12th Earl, and afterwards 1st Duke of Ormond.

[†] Joan, wife of Oliver Grace, was the daughter and heir of Sir Cyprian Horsfall of Innisnagg, only son of John Horsfall, Bishop of Ossory, a native of Yorkshire, who succeeded to that see in 1686, and died there in 1689. Oliver Grace's son and heir, John Grace, was a member of the Council of Confederate Catholics, and was permitted by Cromwell to compound for his estates.

ON COMETS.

There is no branch of physical Astronomy more difficult to explain, or understand, than the theory of comets, which is at present but very imperfectly investigated, even *by the most skilful astronomers. Comets have no visible* disc, and shine with a faint nebulous light, accompanied with a train, or tail, turned from the sun. They appear in every region of the heavens, and move in every possible direction. In the ages of ignorance and superstition, they were regarded as the infallible harbingers of great political and physical convulsions; wars, pestilence, and famine, were among the dreadful evils which they foretold. But we trust that the age of mental darkness and superstition is now fled. For, although modern philosophy is yet unable to discover the nature and use of comets, they are at present regarded only as bodies attached to the different systems of the universe for some useful purpose, which the sagacity of some future ages, will, perhaps, be able partly to explain. The laws by which they move, or in other words, the elements of no less than *ninety-seven*, have been observed and calculated from the year 837, till the present time, of which 24 have passed between the orbit of Mercury and the sun; 33 between the orbits of Mercury and Venus; 21 between the orbits of Venus and our earth; 15 between the orbits of the earth and Mars; 3 between the orbits of Mars and Ceres; and 1 between the orbit of Ceres and Jupiter. Their orbits are inclined in every possible angle; but there are only eight whose inclination is less than ten degrees, consequently there is less danger of their interfering with the planetary bodies. The great comet which appeared in 1682, and 1759, may, as I calculate, be expected to appear in 1835, or two years hence; its periodic time being 76 years, and 212 days. When we examine a comet with a good telescope it appears like a mass of vapour, surrounding a dark nucleus, of different degrees of density in different comets. As it approaches the sun, its pale cloudy light becomes more brilliant; and when it reaches its perihelion, it is often brighter than the planets. The tails are generally concave towards the sun, the fixed stars are always visible through them, and sometimes they are so brilliant, that they have been distinguished during full moon, and even after the rising of the *sun. Astronomers have entertained various opinions res*pecting the comets; the Peripatetics supposed they were meteors generated in the higher regions of our atmosphere, after the nature of falling stars. But it has been demonstrated that they move in higher regions than the moon, and consequently they are above the earth's atmosphere. Tycho Brahe, and Appian, imagined that the tail was occasioned by the rays of the sun transmitted through the nucleus of the comet, which they supposed were transparent like a lens. Kepler thought that it was the atmosphere of the comet driven behind it by the impulsion of the sun's rays. Descartes ascribed the phenomenon to the refraction of the nucleus. Sir Isaac Newton maintained that the tail of a comet is a thin vapour ascending by mean of the sun's heat, as smoke or vapour does from the earth. Euler supposes that the heat is produced by the impulsion of the solar rays driving off the atmosphere of the comet, and that the curvature of the tail is the combined effect of this impulsive force, and the gravitation of the atmospherical particles to the nucleus of the comet. Dr. Hamilton, on the other hand, thinks it a stream of electric matter issuing from the body of the comet. From these various accounts, the reader will probably coincide with the writer's opinion, which is, that the theory of comets has never yet been discovered! Neither is there sufficient authority for maintaining that they are so intensely hot when approaching the sun. The chemical properties of their atmosphere may be such as will totally exclude the action of the *calorific* rays of the sun from producing any great heat on the nucleus of the comet; and to maintain that these bodies are employed to convey back to the planets the electric fluid, which some philosophers imagine is continually dissipating; that one of them occasioned the great deluge which seems to have over-run our globe; and that they are intended to supply the fuel dissipated by the sun, is to give loose reins to conjecture, without contributing, in the smallest degree, to the progress of science. When multiplied observations shall have added to the imperfect knowledge which we at present possess, we may then be allowed the liberty of indulging in ingenious speculations. Laplace, who as an astronomer, is entitled to our highest respect, observes, that the fears which the appearance of comets at one time in*spired, have been succeeded by an apprehension of another* nature, lest among the great number which traverse the planetary system in every direction, one of them should destroy the earth. But, he says, they pass so rapidly near us that the effect of their attraction is not to be feared. It is only by striking the earth that they could produce the dreadful effect; but the shock though possible is very improbable in the course of an age. Nevertheless, the small probability of such an event, if it be considered with respect to a long course of ages, may become very great:—We may imagine the effect of such a shock upon the earth. The axis and rotatory motion being changed, the seas would abandon their former position, and rush to the new equator; the great part of men and animals would be drowned, or destroyed, by the violent shock impressed on the terrestrial globe—entire species annihilated—all the monuments of human industry swept away. Such are the disasters which might ensue from the shock of a comet. See Laplace's *Systeme du Monde*, and *Pingré Cometographie*.

Ballymena. J. GETTY.